

THE CHINESE
PORTRAIT
OF A PEOPLE

JOHN FRASER

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THE CHINESE

Portrait of a People

JOHN FRASER



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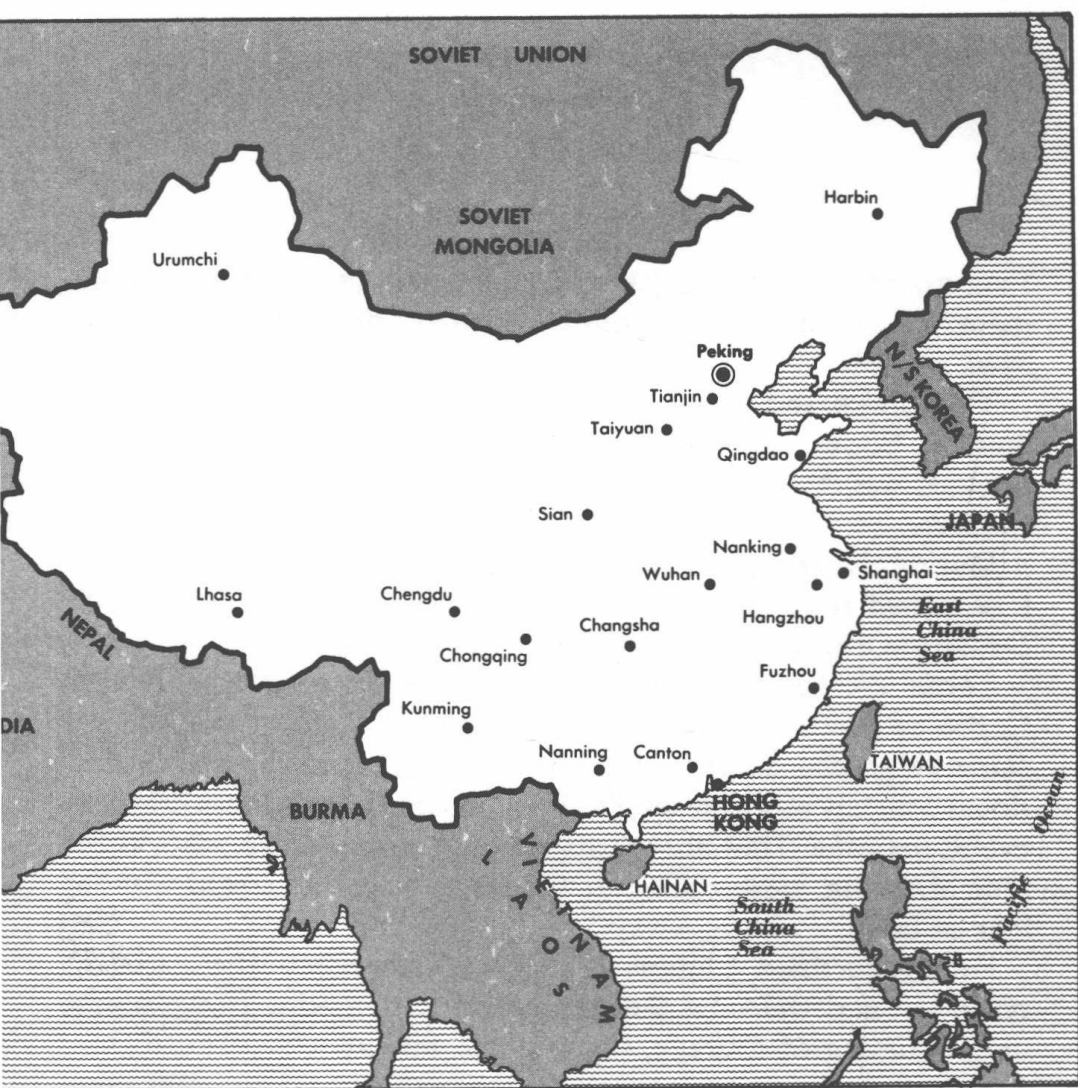
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Finally, to those Chinese friends and associates who dared to reach out and welcome the stranger in their midst, I owe a new understanding of courage, honesty and fidelity.



A Note on Style

For the most part, this book follows the romanization system of the Chinese written language developed by the government of the People's Republic of China and known as Pinyin. In this system, certain sounds ascribed to letters do not bear any obvious relationship to English; in such cases, a simple phonetic approximation for the pronunciation of the word will follow the first reference in parentheses. Where the English pronunciation and the sounds suggested by the Pinyin spelling are similar, no parenthetical assistance will be needed. For example, the street near Peking's Democracy Wall is first identified as Xidan (pronounced "she-dan") Avenue, while the capital of Sichuan province, Chengdu, sounds as spelled.

In common with recent North American newspaper and news-magazine practice, certain well-established Chinese place names (such as Peking, Canton or Tibet), as well as the names of historical figures (Mao Tsetung, Chou Enlai or Chiang Kaishek), will be left in the more familiar spellings, although the hyphen which traditionally separated the two given names has been dropped in accordance with contemporary Chinese usage.

Although Pinyin is now being widely used throughout the world, there are three letters it employs that will always bedevil English-speaking readers. For future reference, they are provided below, along with approximate phonetic equivalents:

X—"sh" (example: Xidan)

Q—"ch" (example: Jiang Qing, Chairman Mao's widow)

C—"ts" (example: Cao Yu, the famous playwright)

For my parents

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The Chinese

